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Federal-State-Local Relations

PURPOSE:

To provide more efficient, direct, and appropriate service benefits to the public, a number of programs conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are performed in cooperation with State and local governments. Some cooperative programs involve grants. Others just provide for an exchange of pertinent information. Under such agreements, regulatory, consumer protection, food, and marketing services and agricultural information functions are frequently performed by State personnel operating under Federal technical supervision. Where cooperative working arrangements are not involved, coordinating and review mechanisms have been developed to cover situations in which USDA activities supplement, parallel, or directly affect those performed by State and local governments. Since State and local governmental units vary widely in legal authorities, capabilities, financing and organizational structure, the agreements and arrangements made with USDA must frequently be tailored to meet special situations.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs in the Office of the Secretary provides a source of current information on programs involving Federal-State-local relations. It is a point of contact where State and local officials and private citizens can bring matters of intergovernmental concern to USDA officials who are familiar with USDA programs conducted in States and localities. In cooperation with organizations of State legislators and State officials, drafts of model State legislation and compacts are prepared covering activities in which USDA has a national interest, such as resources and conservation, rural housing and development, agricultural regulation and consumer protection.

WHO MAY APPLY:

State and local officials, organizations of State and local officials, general public.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION:

Assistant to the Secretary, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Emergency Assistance After Natural Disasters

PURPOSE:

When hurricanes, floods, major fires, droughts, earthquakes or other natural disasters strike, people affected need food and financial assistance, as

well as information on how to prepare emergency food supplies, purify water, repair damaged buildings and equipment, repair damaged cropland and "make do" with remaining resources.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Top priority in the distribution of foods donated by USDA is always given to victims of such disasters. Department personnel help those who are setting up kitchens and shelter areas to get USDA-donated foods, serve on emergency councils, help solve health problems, and make radio broadcasts advising of help available. USDA may also donate government-owned feed grains for distribution to commingled livestock, or make feed grain available to affected farmers at reduced prices. The Farmers Home Administration may provide emergency loans to help farmers maintain or re-establish normal operations. In the case of major rural fires, the Forest Service can assist by either making men and supplies available or by providing technical know-how on fire fighting. When there are serious outbreaks of animal or crop disease or crop pests, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service specialists can help to plan control measures. Emergency technical help from the Soil Conservation Service keeps damaged land from causing sediment pollution, restores conservation measures and gets land back in use, or aids in finding new sites.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Governors, State welfare agencies, local governing bodies, farmers, eligible rural residents. Cost-sharing with farmers is provided through the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service in carrying out emergency conservation practices. An emergency livestock feed program also is available through ASCS.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Assistant to the Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs, Food and Nutrition Service, Farmers Home Administration, Extension Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Forest Service, or other appropriate USDA agencies, either at their local offices or at the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. 20250.

Rural Electric and Telephone Loans

PURPOSE:

To finance electric and new or improved telephone service in rural areas. Electric loans finance construction and operation of electric distribution, transmission, and generation facilities to provide initial and continued adequate electric service to people in rural areas. Telephone loans finance telephone facilities, including lines and modern exchanges. Program goal is to

provide adequate and reliable electric and telephone service to people in rural areas on a continuing basis.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Rural Electrification Administration makes loans to initiate, expand, or improve electric or telephone service to rural areas. An amendment to the Rural Electrification Act signed May 11, 1973 (Public Law 93-32), established the Rural Electrification and Telephone Revolving Fund in the U.S. Treasury as the source of REA loan funds. Insured and guaranteed loan programs were provided under the amendment. Insured loans are made at a standard interest rate of 5 percent. A limited amount of 2 percent loans are available under special conditions. REA also enters into 100 percent guaranteed loan arrangements with borrowers and non-REA sources of capital.

All REA loans are self-liquidating, and are amortized over a period of not more than 35 years. All borrowers must be incorporated under appropriate State law. Most electric borrowers are cooperatives. About three-fourths of telephone borrowers are independent companies, and the rest are cooperatives. REA also provides technical assistance in engineering, accounting and management. In the event of natural disaster, REA makes emergency arrangements with its borrowers to finance restoration of service.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Companies, cooperatives, and certain public authorities which qualify under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Rural Electrification Administration, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Conservation of Natural Resources

PURPOSE:

To help conservation districts and groups of farmers, ranchers and other landowners conserve and improve natural resources.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

As provided by the basic memorandum of understanding concluded by the Secretary of Agriculture with each conservation district, Soil Conservation Service provides the services of professional conservationists to help plan and apply conservation measures. The Forest Service provides services on forestry matters through the State Forestry agencies. Through pooling agreements between the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and community groups, costs are shared on community projects essential to natural resource conservation.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any group of farmers, ranchers, or landowners in a community. (Note: Any individual farmer, rancher, or landowner may also apply to SCS for technical assistance and to ASCS for cost-sharing.)

WHERE TO APPLY:

Local SCS and ASCS offices, usually located in the county seat.

Rural Environmental Conservation Program

PURPOSE:

To cost-share with eligible producers conservation, erosion control and forestry practices of long-term, enduring community and public benefit.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Farmers, ranchers and private non-industrial forest landowner may apply for cost-sharing assistance in carrying out approved practices by filing a request with the county ASC committee before work is begun. Technicians from the Soil Conservation Service or the Forest Service are available to assist the producer or contractor in planning and performing the work. Through funds authorized by Congress and allocated to ASC committees on the basis of conservation needs, the Government's share ranges from 50 percent to 75 percent of the cost of the practice, and can range higher for low-income producers.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any farmer, rancher or private non-industrial forest landowner regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, or sex; whether owner, landlord, tenant or sharecropper, who bears part of the cost of an approved practice.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices, usually located in the county seat.

Agricultural Estimates

PURPOSE:

To help farmers and other associated with agriculture have reliable and objective estimates and other statistical information about crop and livestock production, stocks, marketings, and prices paid and received by producers.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Statistical Reporting Service's agricultural estimates and other research reports are published at scheduled times and are available to the public. Releases provide current data of agricultural activity in each State and nationally.

WHERE TO APPLY:

State offices of the Statistical Reporting Service, or Administrator, SRS, U.S. Dept of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Grading Services

PURPOSE:

To provide producers, packers, processors, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers official certification of the quality of food and farm products, to aid in marketing or establishing the market value of products.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Agricultural Marketing Service, in cooperation with State agencies, offers official grading or inspection for quality of food and farm products at producing or shipping points and at terminal markets. Grading is usually based on U.S. grade standards developed by USDA for these products. Commodities covered are: manufactured dairy products; poultry and eggs; meat; fresh and processed fruit and vegetables; grain, rice, dry beans, peas, lentils, and related products; cotton; tobacco and naval stores. For most commodities, the grading service is provided for a fee to cover the cost of the service. Users of the service may contract for official grading during packing or processing, or request grading of specific lots of a product in warehouses, railcars, barges, or other locations. The official grading or inspection certificate is accepted as prima facie evidence in court. The official grade name or USDA grade shield may be used on wholesale lots of products that have been officially graded and, in appropriate instances, on the retail product.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Anyone with a financial interest in the products.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Federal-State Market News Services

PURPOSE:

To provide producers, wholesalers, retailers, and others engaged in marketing food and farm products up-to-date information on prices, supplies, and market conditions, to aid in equitable and efficient marketing.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Agricultural Marketing Service, in cooperation with State agencies, provides daily, weekly, or monthly reports on prices, supplies, and market conditions for most food and farm products. Market news reporters, usually Federal employees, are stationed at major terminal markets throughout the country. State-employed market news reporters cover major producing areas. Many offices provide round-the-clock information by automatic telephone answering devices. Reports may also be obtained by mail or through newspapers, radio, and television. Market news reports provide unbiased data on prices, supplies, movement, and condition of the market for livestock and meat; poultry and dairy products; fresh fruits, vegetables, and ornamental crops; grain and related products; cotton; and tobacco and naval stores.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any producer, wholesaler, retailer, or other organization or individual with an interest in marketing.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or State Departments of Agriculture.

Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act

PURPOSE:

To prohibit unfair trading practices among buyers and sellers in the produce business.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service furnishes advice to growers, shippers, and buyers concerning produce marketing transactions, advising of rights and responsibilities under the PAC Act. Unfair trading practice complaints in the marketing of fruits and vegetables are handled by PACA specialists who try to bring parties together for informal settlements of disputes. Licenses can be suspended and revoked for violation of the Act.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Everyone involved in buying and selling fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables in interstate or foreign commerce, or having a financial interest in such

transaction, is eligible for advice or to file complaints under the Act. Everyone who trades interstate in fresh or frozen fruits or vegetables must apply for an annual license, except for growers marketing only their own crops and certain retailers and certain frozen food selling brokers.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Regulatory Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, telephone 447-2272; or branch offices located at 417 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90013, telephone 688-3195; 610 South Canal Street, Chicago, Ill. 60607, telephone 353-6220; 26 Federal Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10007, telephone 264-1118; or 819 Taylor Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102, telephone 334-2624.

Plant Variety Protection Act

PURPOSE:

To legally protect the ownership rights of breeders of plants that reproduce through seeds.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service examiners check for distinctness, uniformity, and stability to determine whether a new variety is, in fact, novel and entitled to protection against infringement. When entitled to protection, the originator is given a certificate which prohibits others from selling, exporting, or reproducing the variety of sale without authorization from the owner.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Anyone who develops or owns a new plant variety.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Plant Variety Protection Office, Grain Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 6525 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Agricultural Fair Practices Act

PURPOSE:

To protect farmers' rights to join cooperatives by establishing regulations preventing discrimination or coercion by produce handlers and processors.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service investigates farmers' complaints; in cases of violations of the Act, the Attorney General can take the matter to court in behalf of the complainant.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any agricultural producer who believes he has been discriminated against may file a complaint, which should state such details as the handler's name and address, when the violation occurred, and what he believes the handler has done that violates the law.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Small Watershed Projects

PURPOSE:

To develop and carry out small watershed projects for flood prevention, watershed protection, agricultural water management, recreation, municipal and industrial water supply, and fish and wildlife development. These are small "community size" projects, limited by statute to not more than 250,000 acres—a little less than 400 square miles. Some range down to about 3,000 acres, or 4-½ square miles. Small watershed projects offer excellent opportunity for developing recreation, water supply, and other facilities in the community.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Soil Conservation Service gives technical and financial aid to local organizations in planning and carrying out watershed projects. The Forest Service, working with the State Forestry agencies, helps plan and install forestry and related measures.

First, the local group contacts the nearest Soil Conservation Service office. Once an application has been approved by the State and the SCS Administrator in Washington, D.C. 20250, SCS helps the group prepare a watershed work plan.

Forest Service provides accelerated technical assistance to landowners through State Foresters. This includes utilization and marketing assistance, management planning and related resource advice assistance.

The Federal Government through SCS pays: (a) all construction costs for flood prevention; (b) engineering and other services allocated to flood prevention, agricultural water management, and public recreation or fish and wildlife development; (c) up to 50 percent of the construction cost for agriculture water management and public recreation or fish and wildlife development; (d) up to 50 percent of the engineering and other installation services required for

minimum basic facilities for public recreation or fish and wildlife development; and (e) up to 50 percent of land rights required for public recreation or fish and wildlife development. All other costs must be paid by the local organizations.

Organizations or public bodies may secure loans from the Farmers Home Administration to finance costs they must pay on watershed projects.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any State or legally qualified organization, such as soil and water conservation districts; municipalities; counties; watershed, flood-control, conservancy, drainage, irrigation, or other special-purpose districts; and irrigation and reservoir companies, water users' associations, or similar nonprofit organizations.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Local Soil Conservation Service offices.

Transportation Services

PURPOSE:

To bring about needed changes in freight services and rates for farm products.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service transportation specialists work closely with farmers, shippers, farm organizations, and other Federal and State government agencies in negotiating through carrier bureaus. When necessary, AMS files complaints or petitions and testifies in formal proceedings before Federal and State agencies which regulate transportation.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any group of farmers, shippers, farm organizations, and local or State agencies.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Marketing Orders

PURPOSE:

To enable farmers to work together, in cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, in developing programs to regulate the marketing of their commodities in a more orderly manner.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service assists farmers in organizing and planning marketing order programs for commodities specially authorized by federal law. Secretary of Agriculture issues regulations that carry out purposes of the law.

For commodities other than milk, a marketing order may do one or more of the following: adjust the quantity or quality of products marketed; provide for the orderly disposition of surpluses; enforce commodity inspection; standardize containers and packs; prevent unfair trading practices; and finance research and development projects, including advertising and promotion. Regulations to apply under these orders are recommended by administrative committees made up of producers, growers, and handlers, nominated by the industry and appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

For milk, a Federal marketing order achieves market stability through the establishment of minimum prices to producers, based on current conditions of supply and demand, the equalization of returns to producers, the verification of weights and uses, and a program of market information. A milk order applies to a defined marketing area and is administered by a local administrator appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any cooperative, farm organization or other representative group of farmers in a marketing area.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Food Acceptance Services

PURPOSE:

To provide volume buyers of food commodities with an inspection and certification service to insure that their food purchase specifications are met.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service specialists work with volume food buyers in developing tailor-made specifications for food commodities or using already available official USDA specifications, grades, and standards. Buyers contract with their suppliers to have all deliveries examined by a USDA inspector or grader, and officially “accepted” or “certified” as meeting their specifications. Purchases are then examined by USDA before delivery to insure that specifications are met, and each product or sealed package is stamped accordingly.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any processor, wholesaler, retailer, hospital, restaurant, governmental agency, educational institution, airline, or other public or private group buying food in large quantities.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

General Forestry Assistance

PURPOSE:

To provide technical forestry services to rural communities, large forest landowners (public and private), secondary manufacturers of forest products, forestry cooperatives, economic development groups, land-use planning agencies and other agencies and organizations.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Forest Service makes information available on the latest research findings, carries out feasibility studies for forest-based enterprises, helps large landowners adopt new management techniques, and assists local groups with projects using forest resources.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any organization or agency.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Any regional or area office of the Forest Service, or write to Chief, Forest Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Cooperative Forest Management

PURPOSE:

To obtain better forest management and harvesting practices on private forest land; and better marketing and utilization of forest products as authorized by the Cooperative Forest Management Act of 1950.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Forest Service works with the State Forestry agencies to help them provide technical assistance in the management of forest resources for multiple use and sustained yields. Technical assistance also is given to loggers, sawmill operators and other primary processors of forest products to help improve their techniques and efficiency.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any private individual or organization.

WHERE TO APPLY:

The State Forester, local service or farm forester, State Extension Forestry Specialist, soil conservation district, or county ASCS office.

Resource Conservation and Development Projects**PURPOSE:**

To stimulate economic growth in multi-county areas through accelerated conservation activities and land-use adjustments.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Federal participation includes technical assistance to develop physically sound and economically justified long-range development plans; technical assistance to help landowners install needed conservation measures; cost-sharing assistance to public bodies on certain approved conservation and development measures having community benefits; and credit to help landowners and local sponsors finance planned capital improvements of soil and water resources.

Farmers Home Administration can make loans to public agencies and private non-profit corporations to provide for natural resource conservation and development in designated project areas, including outdoor recreation facilities. Maximum period is 30 years with repayment of principal and interest deferred up to 5 years. Loans will not exceed \$250,000.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any legally qualified local group, such as a conservation district, local governing body, town, local or State agency, or public development corporation.

WHERE TO APPLY:

State Conservationist, Soil Conservation Service, or write to Administrator, Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Comprehensive and Community Resource Development**PURPOSE:**

To provide the area-wide planning needed to improve and effectively use existing resources for economic expansion.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Data and resource maps based on the conservation needs inventory and other SCS, ASCS, and Forest Service technical information are basic to such planning.

Soil Conservation Service provides soils, water-resource, engineering and other kinds of surveys and provides technical assistance in planning resource use, development and conservation. Statistical Reporting Service helps in survey planning. Agricultural Research Service supplies information on techniques and facilities for processing farm products and industrial use of agricultural commodities. ARS gives direct assistance to communities and other groups in planning complete project proposals in the field of agribusiness, in evaluating projects at request of funding agencies, and in establishment and operation of agribusiness facilities. ARS and the Cooperative Extension Service also help local communities plan marketing facilities, such as wholesale food distribution centers, farmers markets, pack sheds, terminal markets, and livestock auction markets. Forest Service provides forest inventory for the Nation's forest land, natural resource information, for National Forests, forestry research, and provides specialized technical assistance in planning forest and related resource use, development and conservation.

Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program

PURPOSE:

To assist States in financing cooperative projects to solve marketing problems by improving the quality of farm products, marketing techniques, market development, and product promotion.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Marketing Service provides State marketing agencies with funds—which must be matched by the State—to carry out specifically approved marketing service projects. Though the main responsibility for program development rests with the States, AMS reviews and approves proposed projects, helps participating States plan their programs, gives counsel on particular problems, and works with farmers, marketing firms, and State agencies to assist in carrying out projects.

WHO MAY APPLY:

State Departments of Agriculture, although projects may be initiated by State or local public, private, or trade organizations through their State Department of Agriculture.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Rural Development Services

PURPOSE:

To help State and local governments to realize their development objectives in rural towns and areas by coordinating and facilitating the application of Federal services and financial resources.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The USDA has numerous programs that apply directly to rural community and area needs for assistance in the fields of housing, community facilities, economic development, conservation activities, information, research, social services, and technical assistance. Other Federal departments and agencies also have programs and resources that are applicable to rural needs, but most lack a field organization that can identify such needs and accomplish the delivery of their programs to rural America. The Rural Development Service, with the cooperation of the other USDA agencies and other Federal departments and agencies, serves as a coordinating agent to make all applicable Federal programs more responsive to rural needs. Similar coordinating responsibilities are accomplished by the USDA representative on the Federal Regional Councils, and by the State Rural Development Committees which operate in cooperation with each of the State governments. All Federal assistance in rural development is dependent on local community initiatives.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Depending on the type of help needed, Federal rural development assistance is available to individuals, organized groups, and public bodies. Most USDA assistance is in the form of loans. Some grants are available to communities of 10,000 population or less.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Local applicants may apply to the nearest Farmers Home Administration agent or to any other USDA representative in the field. If questions cannot be satisfied by local inquiry, they may be addressed to the Rural Development Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Soils and Land-Use Planning

PURPOSE:

To provide soils and other information needed by rural and suburban communities to guide their changes in land use.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Soil surveys, developed by SCS in cooperation with State experiment stations, are used increasingly by builders, architects, city planners and engineers in land-use planning in urban-fringe areas. Such soil maps help planners and engineers determine where subdivisions should go; where pipelines should be

routed to avoid unfavorable soils and underground rock formations; how to avoid soils that are wet and subject to flooding; and how to find soils suited for airports, recreation areas, and schools.

Several States have appropriated funds to accelerate soil surveys and some State agencies publish maps and reports made by SCS for planning agencies.

SCS also gives advisory assistance on public facilities development and rural industries location.

Soil maps suitable for both farm and nonfarm planning are available for many counties.

Forest Service assists in land-use planning by providing specialized expertise and forest inventory and related information to planning organizations.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any public or private organization or individual.

WHERE TO APPLY:

State or local offices of the Soil Conservation Service or Forest Service or write to Administrator, Soil Conservation Service or Chief, Forest Service, U.S. Dept of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Farm Ownership and Operating Loans

PURPOSE:

To strengthen family-farm agriculture by assuring an opportunity for families to buy or improve farms, refinance debts or establish small business enterprises that can be operated on family farms; to finance the necessities of farm production such as equipment, feed, seed, fertilizer and livestock.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Farmers Home Administration guarantees up to 90 percent of loans made by private lenders, or advances loans to be placed later with private investors, for qualified applicants who lack other sources of credit. Limits on FHA insured or guaranteed commitment is \$100,000 for Farm Ownership and \$50,000 for Farm Operating purposes. However, FHA may participate with other lending institutions in a total indebtedness of \$225,000 for Farm Ownership loans to a single borrower, provided certain conditions are met.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any qualified farmer who conducts or contemplates a family-size farming operation.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the county where the farm is located.

Rural Housing Loans

PURPOSE:

To assure production of adequate modernized housing needed in rural communities and countryside, including towns of up to 10,000 population.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Loans through the Farmers Home Administration when other financing is not available for individual family home ownership, construction of rental housing and development of improved homesite areas.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Individual families, private or public proprietors of rental housing, non-profit homesite development organizations.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the county where the housing or homesite is located.

Self-Help Housing Loans and Grants

PURPOSE:

To enable low-income families to become owners of adequate modernized homes by performing most of their own homebuilding labor and minimizing their need for financing.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Loans by the Farmers Home Administration to families for homesites, materials and professional work they cannot perform; grants to organizations capable of providing technical assistance to self-help housing projects.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Low-income families in need of adequate housing; qualified technical assistance organizations.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the county where the self-help project will be carried out.

Community Facilities, Including Water and Sewer Systems

PURPOSE:

To assure a source of financing of water supply and waste disposal systems, fire stations, community buildings and other public facilities throughout rural America, including towns of not more than 10,000 population.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Loans through the Farmers Home Administration when other financing is not available.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Public bodies or private nonprofit corporations empowered to finance, build and operate such public facilities.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the county where a project will be located or headquartered.

Farm Water and Soil Improvement Loans**PURPOSE:**

To provide irrigation systems, home and livestock water supply, ponds, land drainage, erosion control, land treatment and seeding, pasture and forest development, water impoundment and control structures for fish production.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Loans by the Farmers Home Administration to qualified applicants who find no other source of credit available.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Individuals, partnerships or corporations owning or operating farms.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the county where the farm is located.

Rural Business and Industrial Development**PURPOSE:**

To assure a source of capital for development of industries and businesses that will provide more employment and increase the means of livelihood for people living in rural areas. The program may assist business and industrial development in cities of up to 50,000 population, with priority on applications for projects in open country and towns of up to 25,000.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Farmers Home Administration may guarantee up to 90 percent of any loss sustained by a private lender, or advance a loan to be placed later with a private investor, for qualified applicants who lack other sources of credit. Grants may be made to help finance the acquisition and improvement of industrial sites.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Loans may be made to individuals and public or private organizations, including federally recognized Indian tribal groups. Grants may be made only to public bodies, such as incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, townships, counties, districts, authorities and states.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County or State office of the Farmers Home Administration.

Grazing Association Loans**PURPOSE:**

To enable family-size farmers and ranchers to have the use of more grazing land to improve their income.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Loans by the Farmers Home Administration to buy or lease and develop grazing lands.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Nonprofit associations of farmers and ranchers.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the county where the association is headquartered.

Indian Land Loans**PURPOSE:**

To restore tribal ownership and use of parcels of land within boundaries of Indian reservations and Alaskan Indian communities.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Loans by the Farmers Home Administration to buy land.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any Indian tribe recognized by the Secretary of the Interior or any tribal corporation established in accordance with the Indian Reorganization Act.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County office of the Farmers Home Administration serving the area where the land proposed for purchase is located.

Programs to Strengthen Cooperatives

PURPOSE:

To help farmers and others in rural areas increase their income by improving the effectiveness of established and emerging cooperatives and to form new cooperatives to market, purchase, and obtain other services.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Farmer Cooperative Service works with other Federal and State agencies in cooperative development activities described in other sections of this directory. Its staff conducts feasibility studies for expansion of service of established cooperatives and organization of new ones. Upon request, its staff works with cooperatives in defining and solving organization, operating, and management problems. It provides published material on all phases of cooperative operations. It also provides assistance to cooperatives in developing countries.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Cooperative officials and community groups interested in developing cooperatives.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Farmer Cooperative Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or offices listed in the other sections offering various types of assistance to cooperatives.

Other Programs for Cooperatives

Foreign Agricultural Service works with cooperatives and other trade groups to expand exports through market development efforts, including exhibits at international trade fairs and promotion of trade center. Forest Service and Farmer Cooperative Service help existing forestry cooperatives and groups interested in forming them. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service makes agricultural commodity price support available to producers through cooperatives.

Farmer Cooperative Service works with the Extension Service in activities defined under the heading: Educational Assistance to Production and Marketing Groups.

Farmer Cooperative Service also works with Foreign Economic Development Service on cooperative development overseas.

And it cooperates with Soil Conservation Service on recreation cooperatives and rural conservation and development projects.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Cooperative officials and community groups interested in developing cooperatives.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County Extension Offices, State or Federal offices of USDA agencies mentioned; or Administrator, Farmer Cooperative Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Educational Assistance to Production and Marketing Groups**PURPOSE:**

To provide educational and technical assistance, including the latest USDA land grant university research findings, to agricultural production and marketing associations, groups, and cooperatives.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Through the USDA and land grant university experiment station and Extension Service, research findings and educational assistance are provided in the analysis of new technology; and in the conduct of feasibility studies, market analysis, and the development of new products and markets.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any agricultural production or marketing association, group or cooperative.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Local Cooperative Extension agent or Administrator, Extension Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Assistance to Rural Agricultural Processing Industries**PURPOSE:**

To help rural communities establish and operate agricultural processing plants suitable to the farm production, marketing opportunities, skills, and other resources of the particular area.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

Agricultural Research Service industrial specialists help community leaders evaluate the potential for an agricultural processing plant for a specified region. They help formulate feasibility studies to find suitable processing projects; evaluate and make suggestions for improvement of specific project plans; and give technical-economic assistance in the establishment and operation of agricultural processing plants. These specialists also act in a liaison capacity to find any needed additional services, know-how, financial support, and other assistance necessary for such an enterprise.

WHO MAY APPLY:

Any responsible group representing a rural community.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Administrator, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Food Assistance**PURPOSE:**

To get food assistance to people who are unable to provide adequately for themselves.

HOW USDA CAN HELP:

The Food and Nutrition Service, operating through State and local government agencies, administers several programs that provide food stamps or donated foods for low-income families; breakfast and lunch in elementary and secondary public and private nonprofit schools; food service for pre-school children in day-care centers and similar away-from-home organized activities; meals to needy school-age children in summer recreation programs; selected nutritious foods to needy expectant mothers, new mothers, and infants at home; donated foods for nonprofit summer camps and charitable institutions. Information and education in nutrition and other consumer needs is carried out to help participants in the food stamp and family food donation programs to make the most of their food resources.

The family food assistance programs operate as follows:

Food Stamps — USDA increases the food-buying power of low-income families who elect to spend each month a specified amount of their money for food stamps worth more than the families pay. The food stamps are spent for foods the family chooses at retail stores.

Donated Foods — USDA buys a variety of nutritious foods and donates them to the States, for distribution by participating counties and cities to needy families. The same foods also benefit charitable institutions, day-care centers, and schools. And the foods are available for victims of floods, hurricanes, and other natural disasters.

Supplemental Foods For Health — USDA provides selected highly nutritious foods for needy mothers during and after pregnancy, and for infants and young children, when prescribed by public health officials. The foods are given in addition to any other food help—such as food stamps or donated foods—the family may be getting.

WHERE TO APPLY:

County public agencies may apply to their State welfare agency to be considered for a Food Stamp Program in their area or for a family food donation program.

The CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS operate as follows:

School Lunch — Children in schools offering the National School Lunch Program may get low-priced nourishing lunches each school day. Children from needy families may receive their lunches free or at prices substantially lower than the nominal rates. Federal contributions of food, cash, and guidance make this possible.

School Breakfast — Children arriving at school hungry may now receive breakfast in schools located in poor areas. Again, USDA aid and guidance spark this program.

Special Food Service — Food service for pre-school children in low-income neighborhoods, and where there are many working mothers, can be provided with USDA cash and donated foods available to public and private day-care centers, settlement houses and similar activities. Help is also available to summer recreation and day-camp programs to serve meals to needy school-age children when schools are closed.

WHERE TO APPLY:

Application for these programs are usually made to the state education agency in the State capital.

Community Educational, Organizational, and Technical Assistance

The Cooperative Extension Service provides educational, organizational and technical assistance to communities and organizations for the purpose of developing human, economic and community resources to their fullest potential.

Human Development programs emphasize planning and action for improving the knowledge and skills of people, including education and training, through fullest use of educational, institutional, and organizational resources. Rural Development programs are directed at developing new business and industry or expanding existing ones to increase income and employment opportunities; improving community services and facilities, and cultural and living environments; and increasing citizen participation in community decisions.

The preceding pages list important services and programs of the United States Department of Agriculture. They explain what these services and programs are and do and where and how to obtain them.

Personnel of the Department help people learn about and use these Federal programs to improve economic conditions and raise their living standards. Although headquartered in Washington D.C., USDA agencies staff program offices in counties throughout the United States.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE